

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-25 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 1 has been amended based on, for example, page 17 of the specification. Claims 14 and 15 have been rewritten in independent form.

Entry of the above amendments is respectfully requested.

Preliminarily, Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the telephone interview conducted with Applicants' representative on July 24, 2008. Applicants believe that the interview was helpful in advancing the prosecution of the present application.

Turning to the rejections, claims 1-2, 5, 8, 15 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Derule et al. (US 5,683,751) in view of Emmonds (US 6,676,820); claims 1-7, 10-11, 14, 16 and 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Carson et al. (US 4,720,405) in view of Derule and Blum (US 5,331,039); claims 8-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Carson and Derule, in view of Blum and Toman (US 4,877,838); claims 12-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Carson and Derule, in view of Blum and Hughes et al. (US 6,206,982 B1); claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Carson, Derule and Blum, in view of Emmonds et al.; and claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Carson, Derule and Blum, and in view of Melotik (US 3,969,152).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for the reasons of record and for the following additional reasons.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a method of treatment by carboxylation, before

shaping, of a metal surface in oxidizing conditions in relation to the metal, comprising bringing the said metal surface selected from the group consisting of zinc, iron, aluminum, copper, lead, alloys thereof, galvanized steel, aluminium-coated steel, and copper-coated steel into contact with an organic or hydro-organic aqueous bath comprising at least one organic acid in free form or in the form of salt, wherein: the said organic acid is a saturated or unsaturated aliphatic monocarboxylic or dicarboxylic acid, the said organic acid is in solution and/or in emulsion in the bath at a concentration greater than 0.1 mole/litre and 1.5 mole/litre or less, and the pH of the bath is acidic.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the cited references discloses the claimed concentration of organic acid of greater than 0.1 mole/litre and 1.5 mole/litre or less, as recited in claim 1.

Additionally, claims 14 and 15 recite the claimed concentration and further define the oxidizing conditions. That is, claim 14 recites that the oxidizing conditions are obtained by addition to the bath of a chemical agent adapted to the metal to be treated, and claim 15 recites that the oxidizing conditions are obtained by causing an electric current to circulate between the said surface previously immersed in the bath and at least one backing electrode which has been likewise immersed. Neither of these features are disclosed, taught or suggested by the cited art.

For at least the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 14 and 15 are patentable over the cited art.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

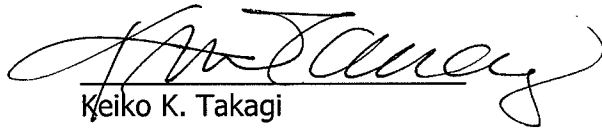
**AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.114(c)**  
**U.S. Application No.: 10/670,513**

**Attorney Docket No.: Q77594**

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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